1608/2846.
X

THE

INSURRECTION.

OR, A

FAITHFUL NARRATIVE

OF THE

DISTURBANCES

WHICH LATELY BROKE OUT IN THE

Province of *Munſter*,

UNDER THE DENOMINATION OF

WHITE or *RIGHT-BOYS.*

by Stephen Bayly

The wonderful Year..... Annus Mirabilis. SWIFT.

What Altars hath it ſpared?..... Quibus Pepercit Aris?
HOR. Car. 35.

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1608/2846.

THE

INSURRECTION, &c.

HAD any eminent Hiſtorian of the Age undertaken to give the Public a faithful Hiſtory of the kingdom of Ireland, from the early Æra of it's boaſted antiquity to the preſent Day, diſtinguiſhing his work into Annals, he would ſcarcely have ventured on the Commencement of the Year 1786 without a Pauſe. Whatever extraordinary Events he might have recorded thro' the Progreſs of his work, yet while he beheld in ſilent Aſtoniſhment the Tranſactions he was now going to relate, he would have thought it neceſſary by ſome previous addreſs to beſpeak the indulgence of his Reader, and to appeal to ſomething more than his cooler Judgment,

to prevent a ſuſpicion of his own Veracity, and ſecure Credit to his Narration. Such a Convulſion, I had almoſt ſaid a Revolution, has taken place within the compaſs of a ſingle Year, as is not to be paralleled in the hiſtory of Nations. Tho' the Facts are of Public Notoriety, yet are they of ſo ſingular a kind, that it is to be feared that many of them will be controverted even by our own Countrymen, who have not reſided in or near the Diſtricts where they happened; and to Foreigners the relation of them will carry the appearance of groſs Exaggeration. It will not be admitted in this enlightened age, when the ſpirit of obedience to Law and Order has made ſuch a progreſs in other Nations, that in a Country, where the bleſſings of public Peace have been enjoyed without interruption for near a Century paſt, where no foreign Enemy has made his appearance for ſo long a time, ſuch a Spirit of Hoſtility ſhould have ſuddenly broken forth, as ſetting at Defiance all the reſtraints of legal Authority, and caſting off all reverence for Religion, bids fair for bringing about a Revolution, that, either in it's immediate or remoter Conſequences, will work a total Change in our Religious and Civil Eſtabliſhments. If the Inſurgents ſhould prevail,

prevail, our Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment at leaſt, ſo long a boaſted part of our happy Conſtitution, muſt fall to the ground. And when one great Pillar of the Fabrick falls, let the other tremble! If they be ſuppreſſed, it is to be dreaded that, in order to rivet Shackles upon future Licentiouſneſs, it will be thought neceſſary to impoſe ſuch rigid reſtrictions by Authority of Law, as may infringe and bear hard upon the rights of Civil Freedom. In either caſe we ſhall have cauſe to rue the day, when either the barbarous ferocity of the *Iriſh* Peaſantry, the ſupineneſs and connivance of the *Iriſh* Gentry, or the intereſted animoſity of Faction, have cauſed or ſuffered ſuch a fire to be kindled as muſt, in the progreſs of its fury, conſume every thing that is eſſential to public or private happineſs.

In the firſt riſe and after-progreſs of the Inſurrection, it exactly reſembles the monſter deſcribed by the Poet — *Parva metu primo, mox ſeſe attollit in auras.* —— "From the "humbleſt beginnings, it has riſen to ſuch a "monſtrous altitude of Iniquity as ſtartles the "imagination." From creeping on the ground, it has ſoared into the regions of madneſs and folly beyond the limits of what the moſt extravagant

extravagant fancy could have conceived. At firſt it was but as *midnight meteors*—bodies of unarmed Peaſantry, ranging through the Country, and alarming the peaceable Inhabitants with unmeaning noiſe and riot, ſuppoſed to be the effects of their uſual idleneſs and intoxication: But it ſoon aſſumed a more formidable aſpect, and, *Comet like*, betrayed omens of portentous import, giving evident tokens that it had a deeper and darker purpoſe, that it was abetted and ſet forward by ſome potent Machinator of miſchief, who working in ſecret, from his dark abode *ſhook Peſtilence and War* againſt the peace and proſperity of his Country.

In the month of November 1785, we think it was, that this inteſtine *Cruſade* commenced, and before the end of the year 1786, it has well nigh effected it's purpoſe. *Prieſts* and their *Altars* were the immediate Objects of its hoſtility, and the War has been carried on with all the inveterate rancour and animoſity, uſually incident to Religious conteſts. But at the ſame time it wears a colour of peculiarity, that diſtinguiſhes it from every other religious or anti-religious War, that was ever waged under the Banners of either the

Croſs

Croſs or the *Creſcent*. True it is, that Religious diſſentions have produced fatal convulſions in many Countries. Contending Bigots, of every perſuaſion whatſoever, have raged with more than human Animoſity againſt each other; and to ſupport their tenets and diffuſe their doctrines, have not ſcrupled to wade through the blood of their opponents, and deſolate their Country with fire and ſword. Still they were the Champions of *ſome* Religion. While they raged to extirpate the Religion which they conceived to be falſe, they were equally zealous to eſtabliſh that which they believed to be true. But never before the preſent day did it happen, that the Inhabitants of any Country roſe up againſt Religion *itſelf*, wiſhing to root it out of the Land.* For if you chaſe away the Miniſters of Religion, Religion herſelf muſt quickly follow. She will not ſtay behind her Prieſts and her Altars. She cannot exiſt without them. It was reſerved for the ſingular Wickedneſs of modern Times, that Bands of ignorant Kearns ſhould undertake to realize the Fable, as it were,

* Such was the terror ſpread by their movements, that many of the Clergy, juſtly alarmed for the ſafety of their Lives, fled from their flocks and habitations, and carried away their families into towns and other places of ſecurity.

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and with *Gigantic* raſhneſs to carry on a War againſt Heaven itſelf. Even the zealous Roman Catholic, forgetting the Superſtitious Veneration he ſo lately paid to the ſacred character of his Prieſt, involves him in the common Ruin, and is ready without remorſe to ſacrifice him to the Dæmons of Diſcord and Sedition.

Their mode of Warfare againſt the eſtabliſhed Religion was firſt to depreciate the value of Tithes, which are appointed by Law for the Maintenance of the Clergy. For this purpoſe they aſſumed to themſelves the Authority of impoſing compulſory Oaths upon the Inhabitants of the ſeveral Pariſhes, that they would not pay more for Tithes, than ſuch a price as would reduce them to the one half of their uſual, and not one third of their real Value.* If the Clergyman ſhould refuſe to comply with theſe Terms and reſolve to carry his Tithes, they were ſworn not to aſſiſt or even work for him for hire. None but his own menial Servants were to be ſuffered to do the Work. Their compulſory

* To theſe rates the generality of the Clergy have been obliged to ſubmit, and their incomes have been reduced in proportion.

Oaths

Oaths were forced likewiſe upon many of the Clergy themſelves, and ſome of thoſe who refuſed to comply with the Impoſition, were threatened with inſtant death, or inflictions of diſgrace and torture that were worſe than death. If Proofs were wanting to evince the unrelenting Cruelties that were practiſed upon all who were expoſed to the brutal rage of the Inſurgents, their ſeveral Modes of novel Puniſhments, which were inflicted upon many, betray ſuch a mercileſs diſpoſition, and argue ſuch ingenuity in the invention of Tortures as would diſgrace even the Nature of Savages.*

Theſe Outrages againſt the properties and perſons of the Eſtabliſhed Clergy may be

* Theſe were the white horſe, burying alive, carding, &c. As many of our readers will probably be at a loſs to comprehend the meaning of theſe terms, it is neceſſary to explain them. That of the white horſe means a board ſtuck with large nails, their points upward, faſtened upon a horſe's back, the man placed naked upon this ſaddle, and driven for ſeveral miles in this painful ſituation. Burying alive explains itſelf. Carding was applying a wool-card to a man's naked body, till he bled at every pore, and was almoſt flea'd alive. Proctors and Tithe-farmers, or any who were bold and honeſt enough to give informations before a Magiſtrate, were thoſe who ſuffered from theſe vindictive barbarities. Thoſe likewiſe who preſumed to diſobey the Orders of their Capt. Right, were ſure to feel the Laſh of their Severity.

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(deemed and were at firſt ſuppoſed) to be the effects of Bigotry and Superſtition, (for the Inſurgents were moſtly of the Roman Catholic perſuaſion) and that they were inſtigated to them by their Prieſts. But their treatment of their own Clergy was, if poſſible, ſtill more unjuſt and barbarous. Beſides ſtripping them of the greater part of thoſe Dues and voluntary Offerings, which had been uſually paid them for the diſcharge of Religious Offices, they proceeded to inflict upon ſome of them the ſame perſonal Violences that have been related above. They drove them from their Altars, ſhut up their places of public Worſhip, and interdicted them from the exerciſe of their ſacred Functions; depriving themſelves in the paroxyſm of their phrenzy of all the fancied benefits of even their own Superſtition. This fact is alone ſufficient to illuſtrate and verify the obſervation made at the beginning—that this Inſurrection was *unique* in the Hiſtory of Mankind, and that nothing like it, either in it's object or its means, has ever happened upon the face of the globe.

Beſide theſe greater outrages and groſſer acts of violence occaſionally committed by theſe

theſe anti-religioniſts, their daily and nightly practices, which comparatively ſpeaking may be ſtiled their leſſer enormities, were yet ſuch as, in leſs turbulent times and in a more civilized Country, would have been conſidered as ſuch flagrant offences againſt the peace of Society as called loudly upon the Government to check and chaſtiſe. Theſe were maiming of cattle, burning of corn and houſes, marching and counter-marching through the country in military array by day and night, ſpreading ſuch alarms on every ſide, that the few peaceable inhabitants lived in perpetual apprehenſions, conſcious that they held their lives and properties, but at the capricious will of a wild and licentious multitude. Their menacing letters likewiſe, demanding either an immediate junction with their Body, or contributions of money, horſes, and ammunition, diffuſed the terror of their name into places where they made no perſonal appearrance, and induced many otherwiſe well-diſpoſed people to parade among them from the dread of expoſing themſelves to the effects of their reſentment by a refuſal. In their excurſive expeditions they made no diſtinction. Rich and poor, high and low met with equal treatment at their hands. They ſur-

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rounded the Manſion of the Lord of the Manor, if any ſuch were deemed to be inimical to their projects, with the ſame menacing audacity, as they did the dwelling of the farmer or the cottager. As the commands of their redoubtable Captain Right met with more implicit obedience from them, than the Laws of the Land, and taught them to contemn their Authority, ſo his preſence at their head relieved their minds from that awe and even ſervile reverence, which they once acknowledged and felt in the preſence of their Landlords. Thus paſſed away the time of an whole ſummer, which exhibited ſcenes new in the memory of man. It was a rare phœnomenon in a country that boaſts the happineſs of long-eſtabliſhed Government and regular Legiſlation, that tumultuous bodies of men ſhould be ſeen, traverſing the fruitful plains in the ſpirit of devaſtation, like the wild beaſts of the foreſt laying waſte the fruits of induſtry, committing to the flames the dwellings and the hopes of the laborious huſbandman without let or controul from any public authority. The forbearance and lenity of Government are doubtleſs to be attributed to none, but the pureſt motives;—the hope perhaps, that theſe diſorders were but tempo-

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rary and would ſubſide of themſelves, or might be ſuppreſſed without bloodſhed. But ſuch virtues were loſt upon the obdurate hearts of theſe infatuated madmen. Even the after-interference of Government, though ſtrenuous and judicious, has proved ineffectual. Its patience they conſtrued into puſillanimity or approbation. Its authority they are determined to reſiſt. Certain it is, the interpoſition of Government came too late to reſcue the properties of the Clergy from the violating hands of theſe ſacrilegious plunderers. The loſſes ſuſtained will probably be felt by the preſent Incumbents, the opulent among them excepted, during their lives. Few eſtates can bear the ſubduction of an half year's rent. The ſevereſt œconomy of their remaining days will ſcarcely be ſufficient to reſtore the deficiency to themſelves or their families.

When the advocates for theſe deſperadoes (for to the reproach of our country, and the diſgrace of human nature, they have their advocates among us!) endeavour to mitigate the public indignation againſt them, by ſoftening as they think the colours of their guilt, they eagerly maintain, that the only object of their riſing was to plunder the Clergy, and

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to liberate themſelves from the payment of Tithes and other dues, That is, (becauſe they hold it to be a crime but of a venial nature) that they *only* meant to *overturn the Religion* of their country, but had not any evil intentions againſt the *Civil* Power, or the *Temporal* authority of the State. How far this ingenious apology, though founded in truth, would avail to reduce the magnitude of their crime, how far they may be charged with a ſoleciſm in politicks, who aſſume in argument that a diſtinction may be made between the Civil and Religious Eſtabliſhments of our Conſtitution, and that an attempt to deſtroy the one is not treaſon againſt the other, we ſhall not now ſtop to enquire. But the matter of fact, as it is alledged, we ſhall take leave to controvert; and in direct oppoſition to it, in the moſt unequivocal terms we do aſſert, that they have betrayed an equal Spirit of Hoſtility, and that they are at this moment, and their fathers have been in all former times, equally inimical, to the Civil Authority, as to the Eccleſiaſtical Eſtabliſhment of this Country. Not to urge in direct proof of this, that the Inſurgents are of the ſame fruitful Stock of Rebellion, from which the natural Enemy of this Empire annually recruits his forces; that they

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ſend a regular ſupply of traitors from among them, to fight the battles of our enemies, and draw their ſwords againſt their country; not to dwell upon their many declarations, raſhly indeed uttered in the moments of triumph and intoxication, that they had ſtrong aſſurances given them of a powerful foreign aſſiſtance; not to mention that in their ſoberer hours they have parcelled out the lands among them, reviving the claims of their anceſtors, and pointing out the particular ſeats and diſtricts, which they were perſuaded they had now a favourable opportunity of wreſting out of the hands of thoſe, who had ſo long uſurped them; not to dwell, we ſay, upon the ſatisfactory evidence that might be adduced from theſe conſiderations, we need only to advert to the many overt-acts of treaſon and rebellion againſt the Civil Power, which in the torrent of their depredations they have committed. The Civil Magiſtrate has been uniformly and ſtrenuouſly oppoſed, whenever he attempted to put the laws in force againſt them. They have fought ſeveral pitched battles with him, and bade defiance to his authority as againſt the foreign enemy. They have broken open the public priſons and ſet at liberty all offenders againſt

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the laws that were found in them. They have threatened by ſecret aſſaſſination to take away the lives of ſuch magiſtrates, as have been moſt active againſt them; and have been deterred from the deed, only by the unremitted vigilance with which he has ſtood upon his guard, or the danger there might be to their own ſafety in the attempt. The attempt has been actually made upon ſome, and defeated only by a ſpirited reſiſtance, or what may be deemed the interpoſing protection of providence. If theſe be not acts of oppoſition to the Civil Power, if theſe be not acts of rebellion againſt the State, we confeſs we are at a loſs in what terms to ſpeak of them. There are no words in the language deſcriptive of their meaning.

If to all this we add the well-known Maxim, that bad men, once entered in the ways of violence, are ever tempted by ſucceſs to riſe in their pretenſions far beyond their firſt projects of deſtruction,—preſſing forward from every proſperous atchievement in villainy to the accompliſhment of a greater — *magnitudine criminum quærentes ſalutem.* —— "Hoping to "eſcape by the exorbitance of their crimes." If, I ſay, we take this into the account, we

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ſhall not heſitate to pronounce that, if a ſpeedy check be not given to the Inſurgents for the preſent, and effectual means be not taken by the Legiſlature to reduce them to the obedience of the laws for the future, we ſhall no longer be entitled to boaſt the happineſs of living under a free Government, where life and property are ſecure, but may reſign ourſelves without reſiſtance to the anarchy of a Mob-Government, where all diſtinction will be done away, and every thing that is valuable in the nation be trampled under foot.

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After viewing the ravages committed by the ſtorm, it is natural to aſk, what could have occaſioned it? From what point of the Compaſs thoſe boiſterous winds have blown, that have ſtirred up ſuch a mighty tempeſt?---Here then we have to encounter a whole hoſt of ſophiſtry and falſhoods. The favourers of theſe diſturbers of the public peace are not leſs ingenious in ſuggeſting what they think to be a vindication of their crimes, than the offenders have been daring in committing them. All the florid tropes of declamatory eloquence are called in aid to work upon the paſſions of the public.—" The ſmoky crib—" the tattered raiment—the naked offſpring—

" are artfully grouped, to exhibit a picture of
" misery to excite compassion — they are a
" poor and suffering people, who have been
" provoked to these acts of violence by the
" iron rod of oppression. — The Clergy and
" their tax-gatherers are the hard task-masters,
" that have reduced the people to poverty;
" and they have only risen up in assertion of
" the rights of humanity, to shake off the
" heavy burdens under which they groaned."

When such pains are taken, when such unwearied industry is exerted to delude the understandings of the public and confirm them in vulgar prejudices, it is high time to endeavour to undeceive them, and by the force of truth, if possible, to break the charm of delusion in which they are held and infatuated, as it were, by the power of falshood and misrepresentation. For never were complaints of public grievances so loudly made, and with so little foundation in justice. When the real Causes of these tragical events shall be brought into open day from that cloud of concealment in which they are at present industriously involved, we doubt not but truth and justice will admit them, in rejection of whatever prejudice and falshood may assert to

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the contrary. But we ſhall conſider them both in their turns.

First, the imputed cauſes—namely "the "avarice of the Clergy of the eſtabliſhed "Church, and the extortion of Tithe-farmers "and others employed under them." Theſe charges, though ſo often repeated, though ſo confidently urged, though ſo familiarly taken for granted, we will be bold to ſay cannot be aſſigned as cauſes adequate to the magnitude of the inſurrection, or ſufficient to have provoked a deluded populace to carry their tumultuous proceedings to thoſe exceſſes in which they have terminated. However the novelty of the aſſertion may ſtartle thoſe, who have lived in the habit of a contrary perſuaſion unſupported either by enquiry or evidence; however it may ſubject the Author of theſe pages to the imputation of partiality, we will venture to affirm that, in general, theſe Cauſes do not exiſt at all; and where in particular caſes they may be found to prevail, they are in ſo ſlight a degree, that they can by no means be conſidered as competent to the mighty grievances complained of; nor are they fit to be urged in exculpation of thoſe miſcreants, who have ſo long diſturbed the peace

of the community, and broken through all the laws of GOD and man to procure redreſs.

We wiſh to bring this matter to a clear and minute diſcuſſion. For on this hinge do the merits of the queſtion turn. If the people be really oppreſſed, in GOD's name let every honeſt man raiſe his voice, and lift his arm for their relief. But let it firſt be ſhewn, *who* are the oppreſſors of the people. Let not the crimes of the guilty be viſited upon the innocent. If it ſhould appear, that the very men, who are moſt clamorous in ſounding forth the grievances of the people, are themſelves the authors of them——if it ſhould appear that theſe very men have meanly fabricated fictitious charges againſt others, merely to ſhelter their own guilt, and baſely arraigned the innocent for the thefts they have themſelves committed, What indignation can ſufficiently expreſs our feelings? What puniſhment can be adequate to their crime? It is to be hoped that the day will come, when theſe dark incendiaries ſhall be dragged from their lurking places, and expoſed to public ſhame. But this is beſide our preſent purpoſe. We have only now to prove, that the grievances of the people, whether real or fictitious, do not originate from

from the quarter where they are charged. And this we do not deſpair of being able to make appear, to the ſatisfaction of every candid mind.

Whoever will draw a faithful portrait of the Clerical character in general among us, will hardly admit *avarice* to be a feature in the piece. It may be ſaid of the prieſt, as well as of the poet—"*Vatis* avarus non temerè eſt "animus." The oppoſite folly would preſerve a cloſer reſemblance to the Original. Indolent and thriftleſs, they generally paſs the firſt years of their lives in thoughtleſs eaſe about worldly concerns for the preſent, in humble hopes of ſome ample preferment at laſt falling to their lot. But alas! theſe hopes are not always anſwered. Indigence is ſeldom avaricious. It is the wealthy wretch, who turns miſer and hoards his gold, from the pleaſure he feels in contemplating the growing heap. —That the generality of the Clergy are poor, or at the utmoſt in a ſtate of bare competency, is a melancholy truth. Thoſe who go into the Church, as a profeſſion and for bread, except by the force of rare abilities, or by ſome unuſual accident, ſeldom arrive at any competent preferment 'till late in life. Many

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ſuch there are at this day, diſcharging the duties of a Curacy in extreme old age. Thoſe again, who aſſume the Gown with better auſpices, with great intereſt and powerful friends to ſerve them, live ſplendidly indeed, but are ſeldom known to deſcend to the ſordid cares of avarice. As to the main body of the Clergy, who are poſſeſſed of the ſufficient emoluments of their profeſſion, what with that decent Hoſpitality which it is their duty to maintain, what with the ſupport of their Families which are generally numerous, what with friendly bounties and Charities which they liberally diſpenſe, they uſually live up to nearly the full extent of their incomes, and do not always leave behind them more than a moderate ſubſiſtence for their widows and children; ſuch as may exempt them from becoming penſioners to ſome of thoſe charitable inſtitutions, that are eſtabliſhed for the ſupport of the indigent relicts of the Clergy. *Avarice* as well as "*ambition* ſhould be made "of ſterner ſtuff"—and can have no place in the boſoms of ſuch men.

But there is one deciſive argument behind, that proves beyond controverſy that the oppreſſion of the people cannot proceed from the

the Clergyman; and that is, that he is himſelf the only oppreſſed and ſuffering man in the pariſh; for every man in it, from the higheſt to the loweſt, lends an helping hand to make him ſo. Firſt the *Great Man*—for there is a great man in every pariſh, or one who would fain be thought ſo. This reſpectable perſonage, who is the *dernier reſort* of all parochial concerns, is ſeldom the friend of the Clergyman beyond the freedom and hoſpitality of his table. He firſt claims an exemption from Tithes for his own *demeſne*, or pays ſuch a trifle for it as is next to an exemption. His tenants muſt afterwards be favoured; and, in every altercated bargain left to his deciſion, he *gently* declares againſt the Incumbent.—The leſſer Gentry, ambitious of emulating the Great Man by imitating his *moderation*, demand a proportional abatement.—Even the little *Country Smart*, who aſſumes the name of *Gentleman* in virtue of keeping a ſaddle-horſe, wearing buckſkin breeches, with a new pair of boots and ſpurs every year, thinks himſelf entitled to the like diſtinction; and if he has a tenant or two under him, recommends them for indulgence. If this be refuſed, he then aſſumes a lordly tone, and forbids his tenants to take their Tithes, or perhaps condeſcends

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at laſt to hook them in at a trifling advance along with his own.—To the poor, who cannot pay, their Tithes muſt be remitted; and the knave, who will not pay, muſt be ſued at expence.—If all and every of theſe exactions are not complied with, jealouſies and heart-burnings, invidious reports and calumnies fly about the pariſh, and the Parſon is execrated from one end to the other of it, 'till the poor man, worn out at length by vexatious inſults and deductions, ſubmits to make a ſacrifice of a large portion of his property, to ſecure to himſelf the peaceable enjoyment of the remainder.—This is a true but doleful picture of the fate of every Clergyman, who is ſent down from College into a diſtant country where he is neither known nor connected; and moſt of them ſtand in that predicament for ſome part of their lives at leaſt. It is a truth of public notoriety that, inſtead of the tenth, which is their right by law, the Clergy in many places do not receive the twentieth of the produce of the land. Men ſo ſituated cannot, with any ſhadow of juſtice, be conſidered as the oppreſſors of the people. They are themſelves the ſufferers.

Secondly,

Secondly, let us now enquire into the juſtice of the next imputed cauſe of the Inſurrection, namely, "the extortion of Tithe-farmers and "Proctors employed under the Clergy."—Theſe two deſcriptions of men, tho' very different from each other, are in common diſcourſe and opinion frequently confounded. Yet are they as oppoſite in their appointments, as the man to whom I let a leaſe of one Eſtate, and the man whom I employ as agent to let and receive the rents of another. To the former the Clergyman makes a demiſe of his Tithes for a certain number of years, or during incumbency, with whom he has nothing further to do, than to receive the regular payments according to agreement, and to keep him to punctuality. The other he employs merely in valuing the Tithes, and collecting the produce, while he holds the pariſh in his own hands. Now in this employment the man has frequent opportunities of defrauding his maſter, but none whatſoever of extorting upon the people. They may by ſmall gratuities ſeduce him from his duty, and prevail on him to make falſe returns to the Clergyman, who has nothing to depend upon but the integrity of the man. In this caſe then the people have every advantage, if there be any,

any, of not being over-charged or extorted upon. We thought it neceſſary to ſay thus much, for the information of ſuch of our readers as may be among thoſe, who talk upon a ſubject, without knowing even the technical terms that belong to it. But to return to the charge that is made againſt Tithe-farmers:

The reader will perhaps be ſurpriſed to hear, that this charge will be found, upon enquiry, as utterly void of truth, as the former. Theſe are a deſcription of men, to whom the Clergy have been driven to have recourſe, by the crafty and fraudulent dealings of their pariſhioners. Wearied out by the difficulty of dealing with men, whoſe ſole object in making a bargain is to falſify, to deceive, and to defraud; diſguſted by the frequent diſappointments they experience from their want of punctuality in paying what they agree for; harraſſed with the fatigue and expenſe of collecting ſmall ſums; they gladly embrace a propoſal made by a ſolvent man, who farming their Tithes, tho' at a conſiderable diſcount, makes them they think ſufficient amends, by the punctuality of his payments, and the competency of the ſums he pays in at a time,

a time, for any allowances they are forced to make him. This man is generally a ſubſtantial Farmer of the neighbourhood, who by a knowledge of buſineſs, and a familiarity with the modes and manners of the people, is a match for them in their dealings; and by his perſonal influence among them is enabled to procure a much better price from them, than they would ever conſent to pay to the Clergyman. It is at leaſt well-known that they would pay with chearfulneſs to the one what they would moſt grudgingly pay to the other. "He was one of themſelves, and it was better "he ſhould have it than a ſtranger." This at leaſt was their language before theſe diſturbances broke out. Indeed it ſhould ſeem that, in ſuch a Country as this, it was an happy expedient to place ſuch a man between the people and the prieſt; who might be able, by his intermediate poſition, to take off in ſome meaſure from the painful ſituation of both; to ſilence the envious murmurings of the one, and relieve the vexatious anxieties of the other, either in making bargains or enforcing payments; leaving the Clergyman at the ſame time diſengaged and at leiſure to attend ſolely to the duties of his profeſſion and the care of religion. Now it is, methinks, rather too haſtily inferred, that *merely* becauſe this man deals in Tithes, he therefore

therefore oppreſſes the people. In all his other dealings he maintains a fair and honeſt Character. In Tithes alone he is an extortioner. The Author of theſe ſheets does not pretend to have had much intercourſe with this order of men; but ſome he has known, and they were men of as much probity and humanity as any of their line of life, or indeed of any rank whatſoever; men from whoſe nature injuſtice and oppreſſion were as abhorrent, as from the beſt in the community. They are in general men, whoſe induſtry, frugality and ſobriety have enabled them to amaſs an ample competency for their ſtation of life, which at once ſets them above the temptation as well as the inclination to oppoſe or defraud. If any reliance can be had, if any confidence can be repoſed in preſumptive virtue, they ſhould not be haſtily refuſed to ſuch a deſcription of men. Many ſtriking inſtances of the offences of individuals ſhould be firſt adduced in proof, before a general imputation of criminality ſhould be admitted againſt them. Be it remembered likewiſe, that no ſpecific charges have been brought forward againſt any. All is ſurmiſe and general imputation.—Beſides all this, it is not in the power of this man to oppreſs the people. He cannot take from them more than the tenth. But the grievance lies here.

here. He makes them *pay* that tenth. They cannot play the tricks of fraud and artifice with *him*, that they do with the Clergyman. *Hinc illæ lachrymæ!* Forcing them to do juſtice is, in their eſtimation, oppreſſion and extortion. But admitting that ſome inſtances of the extortion of theſe men may be produced and teſtified; allowing that among the Clergy likewiſe *the love of filthy lucre* may be found to prevail in the breaſts of ſome individuals over a ſenſe of probity and humanity, (as in the variety of the human character, as in the imperfection of human nature perhaps it cannot be otherwiſe.) allowing we ſay for all this, Can theſe inſtances be ſuppoſed ſufficient to have ſwelled the volume of grievances to ſuch a bulk, as to have provoked an Inſurrection of the people over ſo large a part of the Kingdom, and to juſtify the atrocity of their meaſures? Shall a few local grievances be made a pretext for univerſal out-cry? No. Had their complaints been better founded, had their grievances been more weighty and injurious, ſtill there were many reſources in the Laws, in the power of their Landlords, in the public Humanity, to which they might have appealed for redreſs, before they betook themſelves to a remedy ſo much worſe than the diſeaſe, as public violence and rebel-

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lion againſt the laws of GOD and man. But in very fact they have no ſuch apology to plead; for they have no grievances to complain of. All that they have ſaid, and written, and clamoured, and ſworn upon the ſubject, is counterfeit and fictitious, the work of their own diſtracted imaginations, wiſely indeed calculated for the purpoſe of colouring over their evil deeds, but without the ſmalleſt foundation in truth.

It is the uſual policy of injuſtice to calumniate the Character, while it injures the man; and in this policy theſe Ruſtic Stateſmen have made a competent proficiency, and practiſed it with no ſmall degree of ſucceſs. They and their advocates have wielded the weapons of falſhood with admirable dexterity, and are become as perfect adepts in the art of *political lying*, as if they had been trained within the myſterious circle of Court refinement and intrigue.—Witneſs the glaring falſhoods, that daily diſgrace our public prints. Witneſs the numerous lies, that hourly circulate through our towns and villages. Witneſs the private converſations of every table, where men ſport their licentious ſentiments with freedom, bandy their frivolous arguments, and bluſh not to avow themſelves the champions of riot and violence,

violence, of barbariſm and vice, of ſedition and rebellion; and that often in a language that would diſgrace the mouth of a Cataline or a Maſſaniello.

Having thus endeavoured to prove, we hope to the ſatisfaction of the reader, what were *not* the cauſes of this fatal inſurrection, we ſhall now proceed to ſay what *were* the cauſes of it; to lay open thoſe poiſonous ſprings, from whence theſe bitter waters have iſſued to deluge the land. The Author of theſe pages confeſſes he enters upon this part of his taſk with reluctance. It is painful to him to rake into the ſink of national depravity; nor would he wiſh to be thought a ſevere cenſor of the Age and Country he lives in. But impelled by a ſenſe of duty, and founded he thinks in knowledge and the juſtice of the cauſe, he will proceed. The one juſtifies him to himſelf; the other will vindicate him to the world; as it thinks him right or wrong.

The firſt real cauſe then, which we aſſign of the public diſturbances, is the almoſt univerſal corruption of morals among the common people of the province.—The Munſter peaſantry of Ireland are, unqueſtionably, the moſt uncivilized

uncivilized commonalty in Europe. The improvements that have made a progreſs in other places, have not reached them. They are centuries behind other countries; not to mention their idleneſs and drunkenneſs (which are national vices, and the true cauſe of all the poverty and real grievances of the kingdom) they have a ſpecies of barbariſm peculiar to themſelves, that not only diſtinguiſhes them from the inhabitants of other lands, but even from the reſt of their own countrymen. They are ignorant even to a ſtate of brutality; yet is not this ignorance accompanied by that plainneſs and ſimplicity of character, that is conſpicuous through the ignorance of other peaſantry. They poſſeſs a craftineſs and cunning along with it, that you would expect to find only among men, that had been long hackneyed in the ſordid corruptions of the buſy world. They are as familiar with all the ſhrewd quirks and evaſive turns of the law, by which a bad cauſe may be defended, as ſo many Newgate Solicitors; and in pecuniary matters their acuteneſs ſharpened by their avidity, renders them a match for the ſubtleſt Broker of the Alley. Unacquainted with the moral obligations of doing Juſtice and ſpeaking Truth, they will cheat and lie, and confirm

their

their falſhoods and vindicate their frauds by perjury, without the leaſt remorſe. To all this, they inherit a raſhneſs of mind, or boldneſs of ſpirit, call it which you will, that prompts them to undertake the moſt hazardous enterprizes, and hurries them on to the commiſſion of the moſt enormous crimes, in which they ſtop not to exerciſe the moſt vindictive cruelty. Witneſs the inveteracy with which they fight their private quarrels, when the different Clans meet at fairs and markets to give a looſe to their animoſities in pitched battles. Even their places of Divine Worſhip on the Lord's Day are their frequent rendezvous of hoſtilities. Hence they become unamenable to the laws, and from the ſtate of relaxation in which the country Magiſtrates have held the Execution of the Laws for many years paſt, they have lived in the habit of committing the moſt atrocious crimes with impunity.—To finiſh their character, Ingratitude is their reigning vice. They are not more impatient of injuries, than they are of benefits. They are not to be ſoftened by acts of kindneſs. They deem a man a fool who confers them, and think they have a right to avail themſelves of his weakneſs.—"data imputant, non acceptis obligantur."

Whether we are to impute theſe depravities to that ſtate of abject Slavery, the great Debaſer of the human mind, in which they were ſo long held by their Chieftains while the ſpirit of Clanſhip prevailed among them (indeed there is a great deal of it remaining to this day) or to the ſpirit of the Popiſh ſuperſtition, to which they have been long the groſſeſt Bigots, we ſhall not pretend to ſay. But ſuch are the people at this time, and doubtleſs they were the fitteſt inſtruments that could be choſen for working this mighty miſchief. The temptation, held out to their ſelf-intereſt, of exempting them from the payment of Tithes, made them embrace the cauſe with eagerneſs; and the mode of bringing about their Emancipation exactly fell in with their feroce and ſavage diſpoſitions. It could not have been effected by a leſs vicious or leſs abandoned People.

But notwithſtanding all this, it is not to be ſuppoſed that even *ſuch* a People could of *themſelves* have formed the deſperate project. They are too groſs in their conceptions, their minds are too confined and groveling to have riſen without aid to the lofty ambition of overturning a National Church. They had then, we muſt conclude, their Guides, their Teachers, their Directors. Here we cannot but pauſe and aſk with

with aſtoniſhment, Who were *thoſe Guides*, *thoſe Teachers*, and *thoſe Directors?* When we look around in ſearch of them, we ſee none before us but men of Fortune, of Family, of fair Fame. Can we ſuppoſe that ſuch men were the inſtigators of all this miſchief? Can we imagine that ſuch men could have harboured the infernal ſcheme of letting looſe theſe wild beaſts to worry and harraſs the venerable body of theirfellow-ſubjects, to attack their perſons with unmanly outrage, to invade their properties, and violate all that is held ſacred among men? Can we perſuade ourſelves that Magiſtrates would look tamely on, and behold the moſt atrocious breaches of law and juſtice, without interpoſing their authority for the preſervation of the peace and the protection of the innocent? Or muſt we ſubmit our minds, though with reluctance, to the Evidence of Facts that irreſiſtibly ſtare us in the face, and be compelled to acknowledge that the *Supineneſs* and *Connivance* of the Munſter Gentry were another cauſe of this deſtructive Inſurrection?

" We do not, Gentlemen, preſume to " charge you *all* with a direct agency or " perſonal activity in the plot. *Paſſive obedi-*

" *ence* and *non-reſiſtance* is the crime that
" moſt of you have to anſwer for. The
" Birth of this diſtorted Brat may perhaps be
" traced to the fecundity of a ſingle brain,
" and worthy the child is of the parent.
" But that it has had many *nurſing fathers*
" *and nurſing mothers* among you, is evident.
" The torpid indifference of ſome, the cautious
" timidity of many, the malicious connivance
" of others, who, ſecure themſelves from the
" danger, ſat ſtill with careleſs apathy to
" enjoy the Storm which threatened the lives
" of others, not without a wiſhful eye to the
" picking up of ſome rich venture from the
" Wreck, are evident proofs of the Fact. If
" beſides all this, you have given ſtrong in-
" dications that you raiſed up to the deluded
" minds of the populace this phantom of
" fictitious grievances, merely to blind their
" eyes, or turn them away from the quarter
" where real ones were to be found, namely,
" from the rack-rents and oppreſſive exactions
" of unfeeling landlords—how will you abide
" the vengeance of your Country? How will
" you make your peace with Heaven or your-
" ſelves? That you might have ſtifled this
" Monſter at its birth, or ſtrangled it in its
" cradle, is evident from the well-known
" powerful

"powerful influence you maintain, for your
"own purpoſes, over your tenants and vaſ-
"ſals. But the opinion riſes to certainty,
"when we advert to the noble ſtand that
"has been made by a few ſpirited individuals
"among you, who have been able to quell
"this blatant beaſt, even after it had grown
"to its full ſize and formidable ſtrength.
"They have been able to ſtop its violence,
"not only within their own diſtricts, but to
"hunt it at a diſtance likewiſe, and make it
"quake at the very ſound of their names.
"If a handful of heroes have been found
"equal to this atchievement, what might not
"an army of Munſter Gentlemen have
"performed? But it is painful to purſue this
"ſtrain any further. The hour is now come,
"when you will be compelled to do from
"the meaneſt of all motives, ſelf-intereſt,
"what you could not be prevailed upon to
"do from a ſenſe of honour, or religion, a
"love of juſtice or your Country. From
"the few capital convictions that could be
"procured at the late Provincial Aſſizes,
"ariſing from the duplicity of Witneſſes
"and the partiality of Juries, it is found
"that the leſſer puniſhments which the Law
"inflicts upon miſdemeanors are inſufficient

"to

"to check the rebellious ſpirit of theſe "hardened offenders. They have proceeded "to the commiſſion of ſtill greater outrages "than ever. They have thrown off the "maſk, and by ſeveral recent inſtances of "their conduct have declared, that rents as "well as Tithes are the objects of their "rapacity. The miſchief of your own de-"vices, Gentlemen, has now fallen upon your "heads. Like unſkilful Conjurers, you have "raiſed a Spirit that you cannot lay. The "fire you had kindled under your neighbour's "roof has now ſpread its flames to your "own dwellings. If this does not rouſe you "from your dream of ſecurity, your ſleep "may be everlaſting, and you may never "again awake to the ſight of your houſes, "your families, or your poſſeſſions."

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An happy releaſe might now be given to both the reader and the writer from travelling any further together over this barren ground of altercation and controverſy, was it not neceſſary to ſay a few words upon the ſubject of *Tithes*, a ſubject ſo much talked of and ſo little underſtood.—After a lapſe of near four-teen centuries, which have gone by ſince the firſt eſtabliſhment of Tithes in Europe by

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the municipal Laws of the ſeveral Countries, as a mode of maintenance for the Miniſters of Religion, and of more than twelve hundred years ſince their Eſtabliſhment in this Kingdom, we are called upon to vindicate the equity and expediency of the meaſure. After ſo long a tenure the title is diſputed, and we are gravely told that Tithes are a grievance to the Subject, and that a total abolition of them would be not only highly beneficial to the community at large, but materially promote the intereſts of Religion itſelf. One would think that the very Sound of the Propoſition would be ſufficient to betray the folly of it, and excite nothing in the mind of the hearer but neglect and ridicule. But ſince it is the capricious humour of this innovating age, not to reſt ſatisfied with the practices of former times; ſince the rage for novelty, which they call reformation, has carried men to ſuch lengths of cavil and objection, that they will not admit even the moſt ſelf-evident truths without diſcuſſion, we ſhall endeavour to prove, (tho' the plaineſt truths are perhaps the moſt difficult to be proved) that Tithes are ſo far from being a grievance, that they are really an advantage to the Subject, and that any other mode by Commutation would not only

only not anſwer the purpoſe of ſupporting a National Church, but would be more burdenſome to the public.

Tithes may be conſidered as partaking of the nature of all funds appropriated to the payment of public ſervices. The diſcharge of the civil liſt, the pay of the army and navy, the ſalaries of Judges and officers of the revenue, the Revenues of the Church, are ſo many national expenditures for the maintenance of the State; nor can any one of them, provided the public ſervice is performed, be deemed a grievance more than another. But Tithes have ſeveral advantages, in point of not being burdenſome to the Subject, over the reſt. All the others are paid immediately out of the public purſe, that is, out of the pocket of every individual. Tithes are never paid out of any property either public or private. If they could ever be deemed a charge on the public, it was when they were firſt granted, when ſo much annual revenue was taken out of the public Stock, and made a free gift of to the Clergy, though not without a tacit ſtipulation for the performance of ſuch and ſuch public ſervice. It was rather payment than a gift. But ever ſince that time, the

Revenues

Revenues of the Church have been a ſeparate property, that hangs looſe from the national ſtock, on which none have a demand, and the payment of them cannot be an injury to any. The lands have deſcended from age to age, and have paſſed from one proprietor to another by grant, by purchaſe or inheritance, liable to the payment of Tithes. The Sovereign could not grant them, for they are out of the power of the Crown. The purchaſer could not claim them, for he had never bought them. The inheritor cannot claim them, for they were never in the poſſeſſion of his anceſtors. That part of the ſoil in which the Clergy have an intereſt is never bought, or ſold, or rented to any man in alienation from the Church. Had Tithes never been granted, or were they now to be conſolidated into the general property, no public advantage would accrue from it. The purchaſer muſt make his bargains at an higher rate for the Fee-ſimple of the land; the tenant muſt pay an higher rent for his leaſe.

But perhaps there is a deluſion of the ſenſes, a *deceptio viſûs* in the caſe. Becauſe Tithes may be paid in kind, and *viſibly* taken out of the field, they are ſuppoſed to be ſo much deducted out of the fruits of induſtry; and becauſe rents are paid in money, they are removed

moved from the ſuſpicion of ariſing from the ſame ſource. This weakeſt of all deluſions has, I doubt not, it's influence upon many who can *ſee* better than they can *think*. But ſurely that part of the land, out of which the occupier raiſes the tenth, does not require more of his induſtry, than the other nine parts out of which he raiſes the rent, and the one is as much taken out of the fruits of induſtry as the other. He is equally bound likewiſe to the payment of both; unleſs he can prove that when he takes a farm, and agrees to pay rent for nine parts of the land, he ſtipulates at the ſame time for a right of applying the produce of the tenth to his own uſe. But in fact if he was not to pay it to the Clergyman, he muſt pay it to the landlord, as is evident when lands that are tithe-free are to be leaſed out. The circumſtance of Immunity is never omitted in the Advertiſement, but always inſerted as notice for expectation of an higher rent; and the bargain is ſeldom concluded without an advance much beyond what the Tithe would amount to.

But Tithes have another advantage over all other funds appropriated to the payment of public ſervices. The reſt are liable to be increaſed,

creaſed, and are increaſed as the exigencies of the State require. Tithes are always the ſame. The fifth or eighth can never be demanded for the tenth, and the weight of them can never be increaſed upon the Subject.—All other impoſts are not only taken immediately out of the public purſe, but that likewiſe ſtands further pledged to make good their deficiencies. Tithes are ſelf-productive, and never fail to anſwer the demand. They are a permanent and never-failing ſpring, that require no aid in ſupply of all the drains that are made upon them. They ſtand alone and inexhauſtible. From the pliable ductility of their nature they accommodate themſelves to every change of time and circumſtance: They bear a varying proportion to the value of money and the price of commodities. They riſe with ſcarcity, and ſink with plenty. They may be ſaid at once to bid defiance to all the ravages of plague and peſtilence, of war and famine, and at the ſame time not to ſwell beyond due bounds by the overflowings of abundance, the high price making amends for the ſcarcity, and the cheapneſs of the market correcting the plenty.

But to ſilence complaint at once, and pluck up all pretence of grievance by the roots,

Tithes

Tithes are the incorporate eſtate of the Church, inheritable and unalienable, acknowledged by the common law, and confirmed by many ſubſequent ſtatutes. They are coæval with the firſt planting of Chriſtianity in the Iſland, and boaſt a claim of priority, in point of original ſeizin, and conſequently of payment, to all other property whatſoever and however obtained. The Clergy are the oldeſt proprietors of land in the kingdom: Tithes are their eſtate, conſiſting of a Chiefry to which all the lands of the kingdom have been ſubject from time immemorial. From this eſtate of the Clergy many public advantages have at all times accrued, and do at this day ſubſiſt. Upon the tenants of this eſtate the rents are never raiſed. No more than the tenth can ever be demanded. They have likewiſe better bargains than the tenants of other lands; for Tithes are never paid to their full value: Seldom more than the 15th or 20th ſometimes not the 40th of the real produce of the lands, comes into the coffers of the Church. In allowance of time for payment likewiſe, the tenants of this eſtate enjoy an indulgence not granted to the tenants of any other eſtate in the kingdom. Inſtead of the punctual returns of rents, coming in with the regular return of quarter-day, as with the laity,

laity, one, two, three, ſometimes four years elapſe before arrears due to the Clergy are paid off. The Clergy are the moſt indulgent landlords in the kingdom.—All theſe advantages would ceaſe and be loſt to the tenantry, upon the abolition of Tithes. They would be tranſferred with much augmentation from the pockets of the tenants into thoſe of their landlords, enriching the one at the expenſe of the other. Did then the tenants of this country know and conſult their own intereſt, inſtead of being the deluded inſtruments of their greedy landlords in procuring the abolition of Tithes, they would be ſanguine champions for their continuance and ſupport.

F I N I S.

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JAN

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